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30 July 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

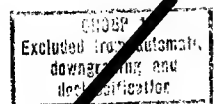
SUBJECT : Weekly Activities Report - Language School

1. The first issue of LANGUAGE HIGHLIGHTS is now ready to be sent to the printers and should be available for distribution about 9 August. The periodical, which will be published by the Language School every five or six months, is meant to help keep Agency employees informed about the latest developments in the field of foreign languages, as well as to publicize the activities and facilities of the Language School. The current issue, for example, among other things discusses the newly-established language incentive program and describes the availability of self-study language materials at the School. Distribution will be Agency-wide, with copies going to each component and the libraries, as well as to the COS Seminar and Midcareer courses.

2. Dr. William VanBuskirk, Chief, Department of Germanic Languages at FSI, came to us this week to be brought up to date on teaching materials available in Swedish. Since we have taught Swedish uninterruptedly during the past five years, we have pulled together -- -- a collection of texts, workbooks, tapes, and supplementary readings that is far better than what is usually available in the uncommon languages. Since his department has recently begun to offer Swedish instruction, Dr. VanBuskirk asked to borrow copies of our materials for possible use at FSI. We loaned him sample books and tapes, and gave him a stack of Swedish newspapers for retention.

3. This week the Language School discontinued the teaching of Arabic. Requirements for Arabic have been consistently low over the past few years, and there was no interest expressed by Headquarters components in having further training in the language done at LS. Our two instructors were given notice in May, and will leave the School on 30 July.

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4. We have begun to turn our attention to the question of teaching more effectively the skill of aural comprehension. A subcommittee, [] has been appointed to study techniques for teaching courses in which comprehension is the only skill required -- for example, by a student from OC [] and work has been started on listening comprehension tape series in several languages. We have, of course, taught listening comprehension courses in the past, but the method was essentially a modification of procedures used in our normal courses, with emphasis on listening. Since comprehension does not necessarily require that a student speak, or even read, the target language, it is theoretically possible to teach the skill fairly rapidly. We want to design an approach that will do it. STATSPEC

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5. A subcommittee on language tapes, [] has started to draw up a set of recommendations on taping. The group is considering such matters as a tape labeling system, optimal length of tapes, tape format, etc. Next week the recommendations will be discussed by the full Linguistic Steering Committee, and a set of policy guidelines on taping will be formulated.

6. Roy Fallis stopped in this week to pick up a copy of our Vietnamese program, which DLI is planning to expand and use as the introductory module in their basic Vietnamese course. Roy is now settled in Monterey and has started setting up the DLI's new Systems Development Agency.

7. The Romance Language Department has been particularly active this week:

a. A set of formal course objectives and a syllabus were completed for both the reading and speaking courses in Rumanian, and a new book was selected as a basic text.

b. Development of a set of oral achievement tests was begun in Spanish. Also, members of the Spanish faculty who had not yet observed the programmatic course at FSI visited classes there on Wednesday and Thursday. As always, the ensuing discussions were beneficial to both schools. We are preparing standard achievement tests to accompany this course, which we will send to the FSI.

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c. After many years of searching for a satisfactory Italian book, the decision was made this week to use a text which the State Department uses in Rome. It is superior to the FSI text used domestically, and we believe it will meet our needs better than anything else available. [] of the Italian Department also began recording a listening comprehension series this week, a series of tapes which we have long needed in that language.

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d. The Portuguese Department is adapting and re-recording basic dialogue material for use on the new Cooper machines which the Language School is now installing. The first four hours of the tapes were completed this week.

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8. One of our Arabic instructors, [] had a baby boy this week at []

9. Language School Statistics:

Students and Classes as of the week of 19 - 23 July 1971:

Students

Full-time - 46
Part-time - 70 (31 Hqs.)
TOTAL.....116

Classes

Full-time - 24
Part-time - 35 (6 Hqs.)
TOTAL.....59

Laboratory hours for the week of 19 - 23 July 1971:

Language School - 63
Headquarters - 43

There were 21 proficiency tests given during the week of 19 - 23 July 1971.

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Acting Chief, Language School

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